HARAMBEE FLAME

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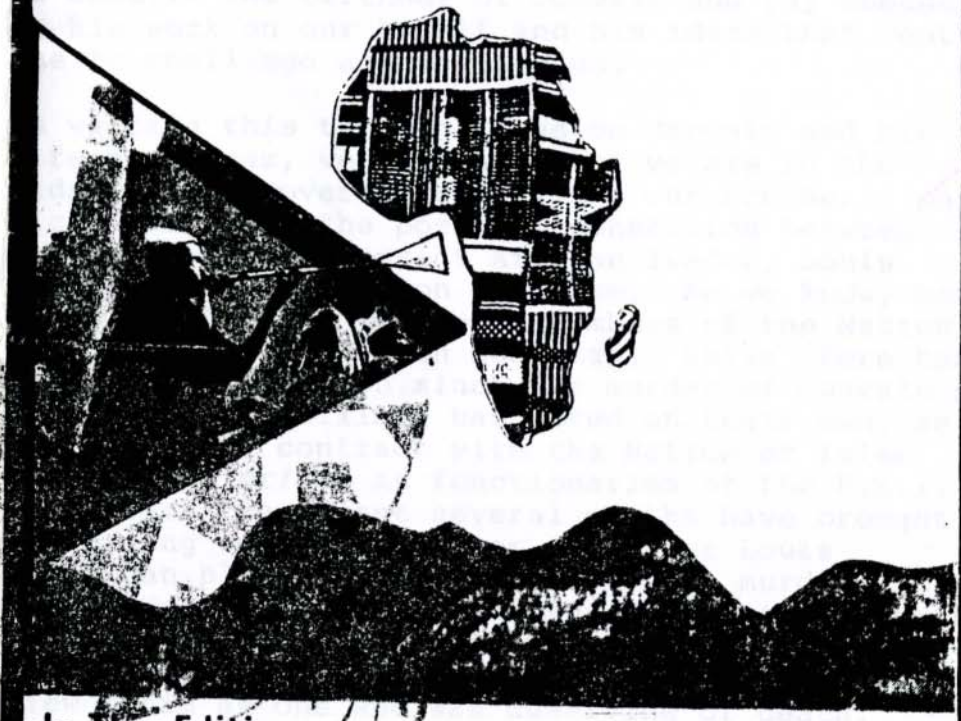

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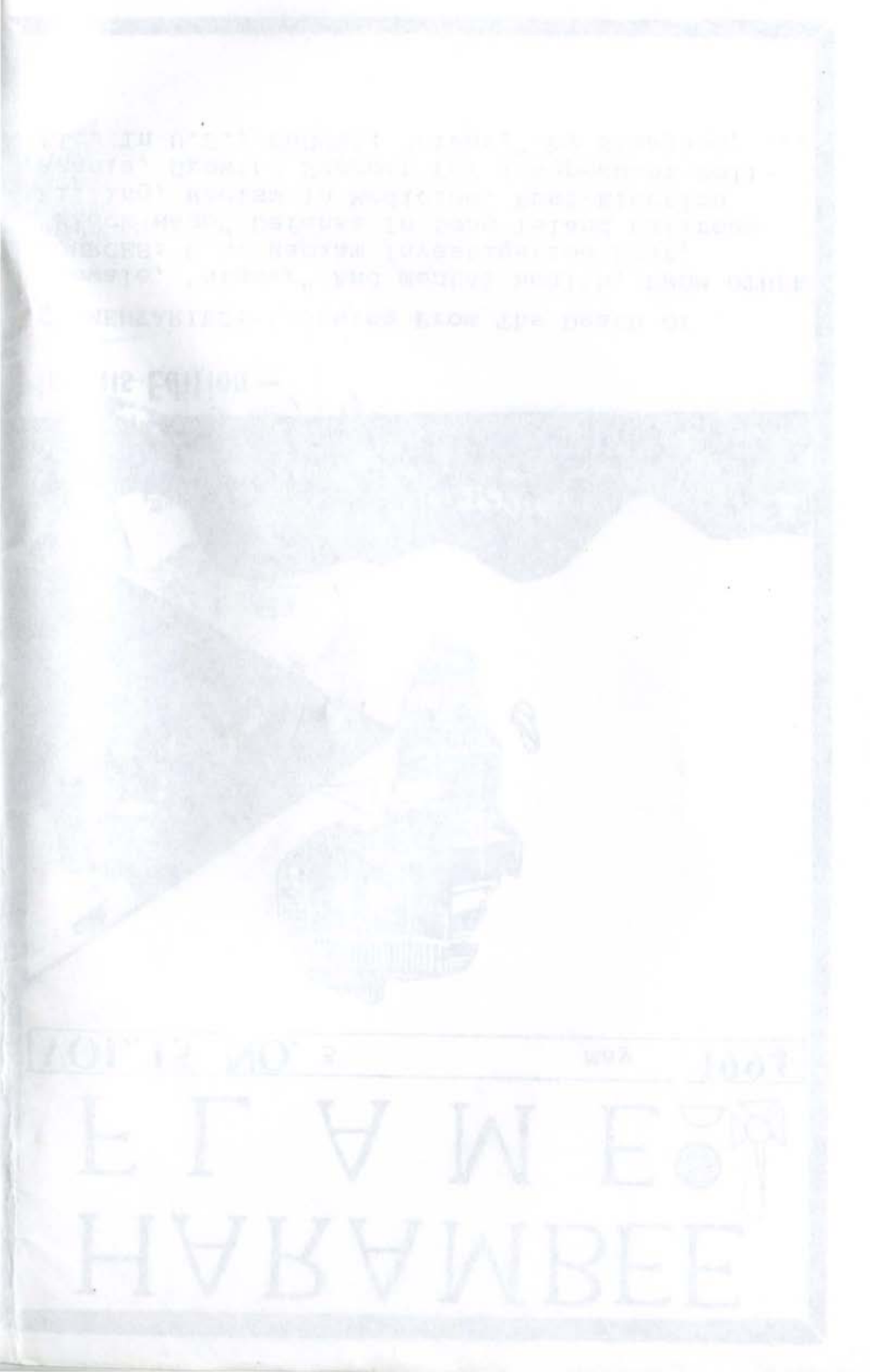

COMMENTARY

In 1964, Malcolm X spent from April 13th to May 21st in Africa. While at Ibadan University in Nigeria, he was given a new name by students there --"Omawale," which means "The son who has come home." But Omowale had not only gone home physically but, more importantly, psychologically. He had become probably the most potent pan-Africanist leader in the U.S. since Marcus Garvey. This month we observe the birthday of Omowale and pay homage to his work on our behalf and his ideas that continue to challenge and inspire us.

As we take this time to focus on Omowale and his life and ideas, we also see that we are in the midst of controversy regardiding our Brother's physical death and the possible connection between that death and a current African leader, Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam. As we know, both Louis and Omowale were once members of the Nation and disciples of Elijah Muhammad. While there has been much discussion since the murder of Omowale as to whether his killers had acted on their own, as hit-men under contract with the Nation of Islam leadership, or/and as functionaries of the F.B.I. or C.I.A., these past several months have brought increasing focus on whether Minister Louis Farrakhan played a direct role in the murder. Though Farrakhan has denied any direct involvement, he has stated that, at the time of the deed, he considered himself to be no friend of Omowale and viewed him as one who was deserving of death.

That's heavy stuff, that Farrakhan believed his Brother was deserving of death. Afterall, Omowale was loved and his ideas respected by African people throughout the world. How could such a man have been deserving of death? In addition to his wife and children and other blood-relatives, Omowale was a member of at least two families: the family of African people as a whole and the family of Muslims (the Nation of Islam in particular).

Any family should be able to expect certain things from its members--love, respect, dedication, loyalty, and so forth. If a family lives in hostile territory and/or is under seige by forces that seek to keep it in check or destroy it altogether, the expectations and, indeed, demands upon individual family members become more intense.

As a member of the Nation of Islam, Omowale owed it respect, loyalty, and other named and unnamed responsibilities of family membership. Because, in the 1960s, the Nation, and several other organizations of African people in this country, was in particularly hostile territory and certainly was under threat of any number and variety of attacks by the F.B.I., local police departments, and/or other government agencies. Because the Nation of Islam was an organization of African people, Omowale, as a member of the family of African people owed it to the Nation and to African people generally to do nothing that could make the Nation more vulnerable to attack than it already was. This he owed both as a member of the Nation and as a former member.

We have known since at least the mid-70s of the F.B.I.'s COINTELPRO(Counter-Intelligence Program) and how that program used knowledge of rifts in organizations and conflicts between organizations and individuals to weaken or destroy them. We know that, under the auspices of COINTELPRO, such rifts or conflicts were exacerbated by forged letters, anonymous phone calls, false reports supplied to news media, etc. The conflict; between the Black Panther Party and US(United Slaves), headed by Maulana Ron Karenga, is a primary example, a fatal one.

When Omowale heard the whispers about Elijah Muhammad's alleged fathering of children whose mothers he was not married to and then had those whispers confirmed, at least to his satisfaction, he was devastated. He had loved and revered his leader and teacher more even than he might have loved a flesh-and-blood father. He was hurt and

probably angered too. Maybe Omowale had placed Elijah on too high a pedestal. In addition to his own personal pain, Omowale may have felt that Elijah's "indiscretions" amounted to a **betrayal** of the Nation. If he felt this way, then his own sense of loyalty to and respect for the Nation required that he not keep quiet. But even so, for him to go public placed the Nation in jeopardy. His going public, to the Caucasian-run media in particular, provided the enemies of African people with ammunition they could use to discredit an African leader and an organization that were raising African people out of the muddy depths of pathetic negroness.

When Omowale's house was fire-bombed, he certainly had reason to believe that folks in the Nation were the culprits. He also had reason to believe that F.B.I. agents or other police were responsible. There can be no question but that Omowale was angry - to put it mildly - that his wife and children had only barely escaped death. When we're angry, we don't always thinks clearly and often say thing we would do well not to say. By publicly accusing the Nation of responsibility for the fire-bombing, he not only disrespected the Nation by making an accusation he did not know to be true but made it vulnerable to forces(F.B.I. and others) that would use the incident and his comments about it to drive a wedge more deeply between opposing or differing factions within and without the Nation.

It is difficult to believe that, with regard to both his public comments about Elijah's alleged acts of fornication and his public pointing the finger of guilt at the Nation of Islam in the bombing of his house, Omowale was trying to do harm to the Nation or to the larger family of African people. He was a Brother to us. He loved us deeply. But he was a human being, and humans don't come perfect.

Was Omowale deserving of death? We have to make up our own minds on this. And for those of us who think he was so deserving, the question of whether Farrakhan played a part in Omowale's murder is probably unimportant. For those of us who don't think his exercising of bad judgement warranted the snuffing out of this important African leader's life, the matter of who took part, in word or deed, in his murder is no small matter. We want to know and probably want the responsible parties to pay severely for our loss. But there are others--some among us and some not--who didn't love Omowale or respect his ideas while he physically lived and could truly care less about his living memory now but who do care that Louis Farrakhan is gaining a large following from among us and is making the kinds of sounds the Caucasian Establishment and its trained African door-boys(and girls) don't want to hear.

These people are using the question of who may have ordered the hit on Omowale to tarnish the image of Farrakhan and, in so doing, throw a wrench into the works of the leadership he is providing to those of us who listen to and/or follow him. Just as there were forces who successfully exploited differences between Omowale and Elijah almost three decades ago, forces are at work now to get followers of Farrakhan and other Africans to turn against him, to impede the progress of efforts at cooperation between the Nation of Islam and other groups of African people, and to otherwise stunt the growth of unity among us.

Among the things that the physical death of Omowale should have taught us is that we must resolve whatever serious disagreements we may have among us and take care not to allow such differences to become tools in the hands of those who seek to destroy that which we seek to build. The degree to which we decide to listen to and/or follow Louis Farrakhan should be determined by our agenda and our assessment of him, not by the agenda and motives of others.

-2nd commentary on page 12-

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped return envelope.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

U.S. Fails To Block U.N. Creation Of Racism Investigation Post

"In December 1993, the United Nations' Commission on Human Rights appointed Mr. Maurice Glele-Ahanhanzon as the first Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance...In March of last year, the Commission finally created the post which Mr. Glele assumed in December. The US and other western powers tried to block the creation of a Special Rapporteur on Racism, but given the reality of increasing racism in their countries, they could not openly oppose such a position. So their tactic was to broaden the mandate, the guidelines the special rapporteur would use to determine what he had to investigate...

"This same goal of diverting attention from the racism faced by African people throughout the Diaspora could be seen in the Commission session which just ended on March 11th. For nearly four weeks there was a heated debate on a resolution concerning the UN's Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Turkey introduced the resolution which spoke of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The US introduced an amendment that added 'anti-Semitism'...Several Arab and African countries then insisted that if anti-Semitism were going to be included then anti-Black, Negrophobia, anti-Islam and anti-Arab must be part of the resolution. And that was the position that was finally adopted...

"African people in particular must now take the initiative in requesting that Mr. Glele investigate racism in the US. Our requests must include specific reasons why he should come here..."

-from "Fighting Racism In The UN," pages 14 and 18, March/April ARM THE MASSES(N.Y.,N.Y.)

"Black Rage" Defense To Be Used In Long Island Railroad Killing Case

"After attorneys for alleged Long Island Rail Road(LIRR) gunman Colin Ferguson announced plans to use 'Black rage' as a defense for him, white jail guards allowed 3 whites and an Hispanic to beat the suspect, as a show of 'white rage', defense attorneys charged...

"Civil rights attorneys William Kunstler and Ronald Kuby took over the Ferguson case in mid-March...

"Defense attorneys plan to show their client, who is Black and was born in Jamaica, snapped under the pressure of racism...

"Mr. Ferguson's attorneys said the 'Black rage' defense is an insanity plea. 'When people have been enslaved, brutalized and discriminated against for 400 years, someone is going to snap. People don't emerge unscathed from that kind of treatment', Atty. Kuby said, after a brief court proceeding here...

"Attorneys Kunstler and Kuby said they plan to have two Black pshychiatrists, Harvard's Dr. Alvin Poussaint and City College of New York's Dr. Richard Dudlly, to testify about 'silent burning rage'..."

-from "White Rage: Prison Inmates Beat Black Man Charged In Long Island Rail Road Shooting, Lawyers Say"; pages 4 and 9; April 13 THE FINAL CALL

Racism In Bed With Medicine Too: Drug-Testing

..."According to a complaint by the National Institutees of Health, women seeking prenatal care at a clinic in the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, were tested positive for illegal drug use. Some were arrested hours after they gave birth. Some were put in leg irons and some were handcuffed to their hospital beds. Since 1989, about 40 women who have presented themselves to the hospital for prenatal care, have been arrested. Approximately two-thirds were Black.

"...Zita Lazzarini, a lawyer who teaches at the Harvard University School of Public Health, says that in 1993, nearly all--86 percent--of the women prosecuted and jailed for drug abuse while pregnant are Black...

"Because public clinics for the poor test and report more vigorously than private clinics for the middle-class and well-to-do, poor women and Black women are most frequently reported...

"In five public health clinics and 12 private obstetrical offices in Pinellas County, Fla., urine samples of pregnant women were tested for illicit drugs...

"Among pregant Black women, 14.1 percent used illegal drugs and among pregnant White women, 15.4 percent...used drugs. But Black women were reported to authorities at a rate 10 times higher than White women..."

-from "Hospitals Test Medicine's Moral Responsibility," page 22, June EMERGE(Arlington, VA.)

Post-Election Azania: No Easy Road To Freedom

"...the main party of the white ruling class, the National Party, led by" [former] "President DeKlerk, is guaranteed a place in a 'Government of National

Unity' for a five-year period. This is included in the 'sunset clause', agreed to by the ANC, which gives a cabinet seat to any party obtaining 5 percent or more on the ballot, and then imposes the need for approval by two-thirds of the cabinet on 'certain issues'. The National Party and the other main white party, the Democratic Party, will thereby have effective veto power over all major decisions...

"The South African Police and the South African Defence Force (SADF)...will be left under their existing command. Meanwhile the ANC's military wing, the MK, is dissolved and partially incorporated into the SADF or the...National Peacekeeping Force, charged with policing the black townships...

"The dominant white caste, making up 13 percent of South Africa's population, owns 86 percent of the land, 90 percent of all productive wealth, and on an average has an annual income ten times greater than that of the blacks. Three out of every five blacks live in rural areas where over 80 percent have no electricity and over 90 percent have no sewage. Fully **half** of the black labor force has no permanent regular employment..."

-from "ANC/De Klerk Deal Is Betrayal Of Black Freedom," page 4, April 29 WORKERS VANGUARD(New York, New York)

Growing Support For Independent Political Party

Among Africans In U.S.

..."Black support for creation of an all Black political party doubled over the past five years after declining the previous decade, according to the survey titled, 'Black Discontent: The Preliminary Report of the 1993-94 National Black Politics Study'.

"The study reports for the first time data from a

random national survey of 1,200 Blacks who discussed their views on Black politics and other issues, such as, Black separatism and Black economic prospects. Blacks were generally very pessimistic about the future...

"Lu Palmer, of Chicago's Black Independent Political Organization, believes Black ties to the Democratic Party, lack of confidence in those who have tried to organize such parties, concerns that Black voting population may be too small to support an independent Black party have kept the idea from moving forward...

"Ron Daniels, a 1992 independent presidential candidate, sees political pragmatism, campaign finances and problems with ballot access as reasons support for an all-Black party has not translated into an effective organization..."

-from "Black Support For Independent Political Party Grows," page 5, May 11 THE FINAL CALL

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KUUMBA

Frenzy!

She dance a frenzy when she's alone
Doin' the slopp, the funky chicken
The mashed potatoes and the jerk
Watch her work now
Shakin' her shoulders
Movin' her hips in one-eighth time
Thowin' her hands in the air and
Waving like she just can't help
But give it all up to the music
She dance a frenzy out of herself
The reflection in the mirror
On the bedroom wall
Tells it all as she checks herself out
Electric slide, knees high
Steppin' wide, then
Skankin' to a reggae rhythm like
She ain't got no sense
Intense like a mug
Movin' so smoothly from
One dance to another
The music takin' her like
No lover ever could
Makin' her move like that
Feel like that,
Oh the techno groove of it!
Kickin' it like an aerobics maniac

Seized by an African beat
The heat makin' a soulful
Connection to the tribal, the primal
Out of control
Her head snaps back, eyes close
Give it up! All of it! All of it!
All she's held in
At the parties, the dance halls,
The clubs and the get-togethers,
Gettin' down all by herself
with Kriss Kross,
Bobby Brown, SWB, Eek-a-Mouse,
Mutabaruka, Sista Carol, Heavy D
Arrested Development, The Four Tops
Can't Help Myself, all by herself,
Because she's gained a few pounds,
Her hair is starting to grey
And at fifty,
the people in her literary guild,
Church group and women's club
Just wouldn't understand.

She dance a frenzy!
Doin' the temptation's walk,
The funky chicken, the stroll,
Bend over let me see ya
Shake a tail feather,
Shot Gun-uuu-uuuun
Shoot it for me
Right now.....

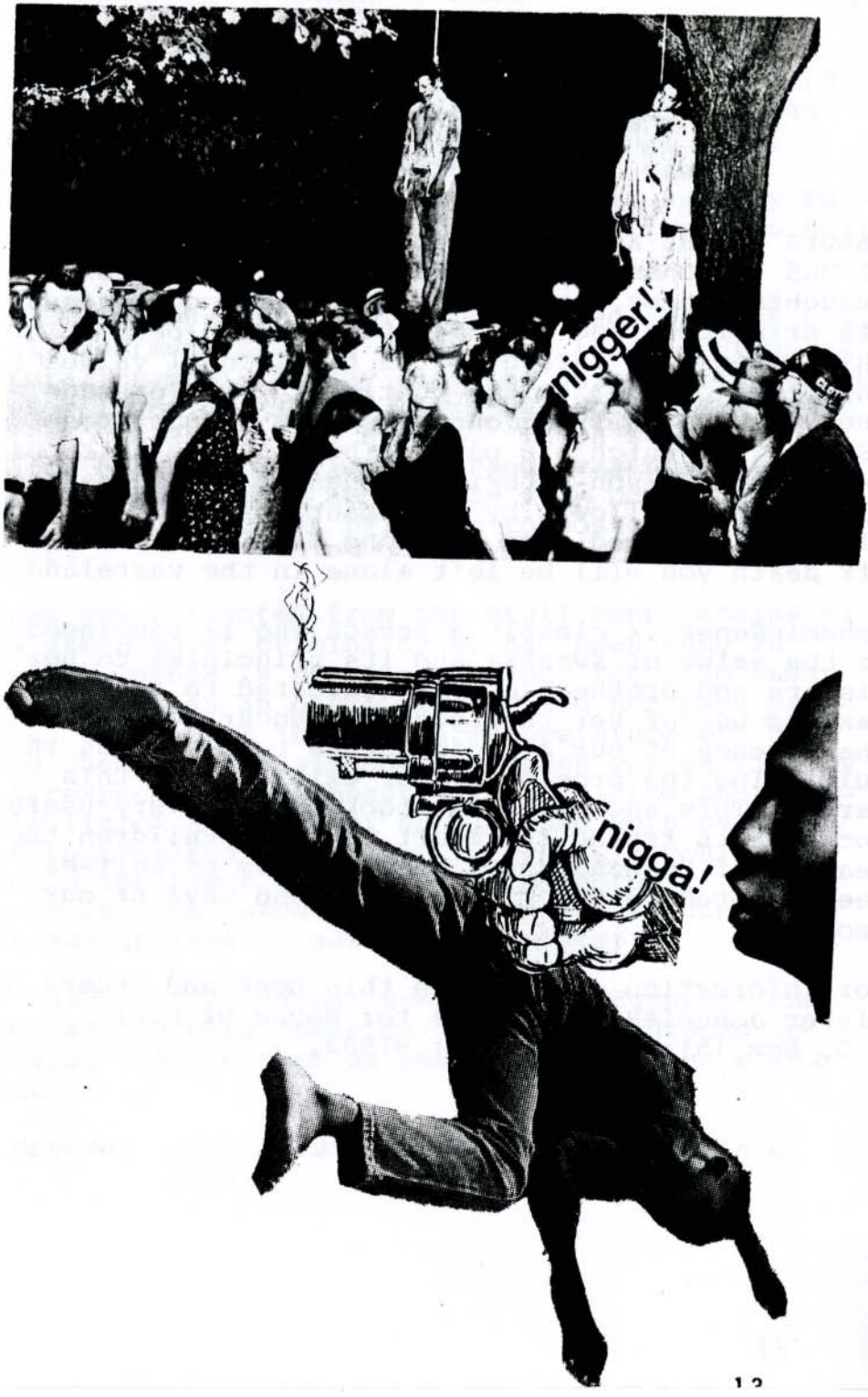
Staajabu March 1994

COMMENTARY

How was the "nigger" born? Europeans developed the idea of the "nigger" to attempt to justify the brutalization of **African** people through the institution of slavery. Because most of the Europeans involved in the enslavement of African people were Christian and the mistreatment of human beings violates Christian principles, they put forward the idea that Africans were not actually human beings but **sub-human beasts.** If Africans could be thought of as sub-human beasts, then, of course, the treatment of them as cows or horses, or other beasts could be justified. As early as 1651, "the English Guinea Company...instructed a captain to barter liquor at Gambia River for a 'Cargo of negers to be carried to Barbados.'"(BLACK MAJORITY: NEGROES IN COLONIAL SOUTH CAROLINA by Peter H. Wood)

What is **mental illness**? It is, among other things, a condition of the mind that causes or heavily influences a person to act in a destructive manner toward him or her self and/or toward the group to which that person belongs. Such a form of mental illness can be brought on by forces outside the mind of the person. In the United States, centuries of degrading treatment of African people through slavery; many decades of transmitting to African people the ideas of Caucasian("white") superiority and African("black") inferiority by means of the school system, the Christian churches, and the commercial media; etc. have led to the present situation in which many of us are thinking of ourselves and each other as "niggers"(sub-human beasts) and killing each other and risking our own lives as if we had no more value than common houseflies.

One of the common characteristics of mental illness is that the mentally ill person does not recognize that he or she is ill and closes his or her eyes to even the clearest evidence that he or she needs help. We can trace this disease of many of our minds to racist Caucasians and their institutions. But we will have to find the cure from among ourselves.


nigger!
nigga!

"Among the Shona
A family's success
Is weighed by their children's happiness
And that family's state of health
Not by the accumulation of material wealth
..."

VALUES OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY: THE KWANZAA CANONS is JohnnieRenee Nelson's fourth book of thoughts, poems, and other expressions on Kwanzaa, its principles and the need for African people in this country to return to the traditional values of ancestors on the African continent. The passage quoted above is from JohnnieRenee's thought/poem "Shona," in which she pays tribute to the spiritual and otherwise non-material values of the Shona people. It is followed by an Ashanti proverb: "If you alone drink a medicine for long life, or to stave off death you will be left alone in the wasteland."

JohnnieRenee is clearly a person who is convinced of the value of Kwanzaa and its principles to her Sisters and Brothers and is dedicated to making maximum use of her knowledge and understanding of the essence of our African nature to assist us in fulfilling the promise of our existence on this earth. This and her other books can be very useful for parents trying to impart to their children the meaning of Kwanzaa and a strong sense of self-esteem, rooted in the rich history and ways of our people.

For information on ordering this book and others by Sister JohnnieRenee, write to: House of Nia; P.O. Box 151; Bonita, CA.; 91902.

BACK IN TIME

Manure was a popular drug in the absence of African herbal drugs and alchemic preparations. Cardinal Richelieu, on his deathbed, drank horse manure mixed with white wine as a medicinal cure. Natural History by Pliny listed human manure, urine and menstrual blood as medicines used by Europeans. Also, menstrual blood was believed to kill insects and calm storms at sea.

The Europeans imitated the fossilized plant or crystal treatment systems of Africa, instead of using natural crystals. They used the crystallized waste of the liver or kidney. In other words, they used gallstones and kidney stones. These stones were called Bezoar. Charles of France was presented with a Bezoar stone and he was very proud of it. The Bezoar stone was believed to possess curative powers.

Usnea was collected from the skull bone remains of the skeleton of criminals who had been hung in chains. Usnea is the moss scraped from the human skull. It was an official drug and European medicinal was listed in the pharmacopeia(present day drug chemical formula book). Usnea was carried by all respectable apothecaries. Also, the pharmacopeia listed the sole of an old shoe worn by some man that walked extensively. The sole would be ground and taken internally fo dysentery. Hang man's rope was used for an external medicine. It was and applied to sores and bruises...

In 1850 French medical schools used Egyptian mummies as learning vehicles. They also ground up mummies and ate them as medicine and a sex stimulant.

Source: **AFRICAN HOLISTIC HEALTH** by Llaila O. Afrika

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The first Marketing and Business Development Conference geared specifically for the African American bookseller will be held at the American Booksellers Convention, Friday, May 27, 1994, 1:00p.m. - 4:00 p.m., Los Angeles Convention Center, Room 504.

Topics to be discussed include:

-marketing(product, price, place promotion) from a Black perspective

-how successful booksellers "do more with less"

-the secrets of successful event planning

-bookselling in non-traditional environments

-censorship of Black authors

-the African American bookstore as a community resource or "House of Power"

Among the confirmed speakers are: Tina McElroy Ansa("Ugly Ways"), Brent Staples("Parallel Time"), et al. To register for ABA, call 800/346-4036 or, for more information, contact 213/857-0511.

Historian Ashra Kwesi will be the guest speaker at the June 12 Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization banquet at the state prison in Lincoln. Ashra Kwesi has focused much of his research and study on the matters of the African origin of civilization and the African origin of Judeo-Christianity. He spent thirteen years studying and researching in Egypt and a year, under the guidance of Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan, in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Kenya. In addition, he spent time in 1985 at the British Museum in London and the Louvre Museum in Paris to research and document African Nile Valley history. Our banquet will also feature performance art and a meal consisting of both African and African American dishes. Contact us by May 27th.

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-Arms/Chrmn. of Cultural Affairs Committee) - Shaheed Hamza

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Akowe(Secretary) - Saleem Al Amin

*and HARAMBEE FLAME Editor

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Africans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.